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755

Another man describes the first ceremony he recalls:

My father once cured me with his ceremony. I was a pretty small boy. I can hardly remember it. My father says that I must have been about six years old. Maybe I was seven.

I got very, very sick. My mother and my father thought I was going to die. This was out in the mountains. Of course, my father knew in his own way how to use his power and cure people. So my father went to work on me during part of the day and a good part of the night, I know. While he was carrying on this ceremony for me, I went blind, completely blind.

Well, he got me a little better from my sickness, but after I got well I was blind. It seemed as though my eyes were back in my head, and they hurt badly. It looked as though a different sickness had come over my eyes. It was just as though something was turning way back in my head.

My father was very good at the masked-dancer ceremony. He just made a mask and horns [frame or uprights surmounting the mask] and decorated them as though they were going to be put on a dancer. He made the sticks too [wooden wands carried by the masked dancer]. [532]

He had the mask in his right hand and was shaking it in front of me. He was singing those ceremonial songs. Every time he sang a song he held that mask to my head this way and that, to my eyes and all over me. I was half-sitting up, on a slant. I couldn't see, but I knew what he was doing and what he was saying. I remember it.

And my father was crying part of the time; I could hear him. He said, "Why not punish me this way? I've lived here many years on earth. I've seen what it looks like. I know how hard it is to live through this world. Don't kill that poor little child. He didn't harm anyone. I love him. Don't let him go. I want him to live to an old age in this world." He said, "If you want to kill anybody in this family, kill me. Take me. I know you can help me relieve this poor child from his sickness, and there's no reason why you should act this way to me." He was angry about this, angry at his own power. I heard him arguing with his power. He tried pretty hard. "Well," he said to his power, "if you aren't going to do what I want you to do, if you're going to have your own way all the time, you might as well stop talking to me from now on." He was scolding his power.

After a while he said, "Here's an eagle feather, son. I'm going to try this eagle feather; my power wants me to try it. Because you went blind, your eyes are going to go back, then the sickness is coming out. It's going to pop out and it's going to kill you. This is my last chance for you. If this doesn't work, I'm going to give up all hope." He said he saw it in a vision, a spirit talked to him. I don't know who was talking to him. I couldn't have seen if someone had been there. My mother didn't see anyone and she was sitting there. But he knew what he was doing, I guess.

He said, "If this eagle feather doesn't stay on you, you've got no chance. If it stays on you, it will show that you are going to get your sight back and get well. It will tell us right here, one way or the other."

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CHILDHOOD

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There are practical jokers, even among the children, who 824
throw clinging or mildly irritating grasses (*Nama hispida* is one) 522
at someone or hide them in his bed.

The children of an encampment organize expeditions to search 857
for certain delicacies which are not plentiful or valuable enough 222
to figure in adult food economy. Ground cherries, the red fruits [26]
of the nipple cacti, and willow buds are gathered, and cotton-
wood buds are chewed like gum. The search for honey provides
another diversion:

> When I was a boy, so long ago I can hardly remember it now, there was a certain bee we used to get. When it collected honey the children caught it, split it open, and sucked out the sweet stuff from the body. They didn't eat the whole thing. Only children did this. I never saw grown-ups do it.

When hives are found in the trees, a smudge fire is started under the tree and the bees are smoked out. A cliff hive is dislodged by well-directed shots from slings. For a ground hive another method is employed: "When the hive is in the ground a boy stands over the small hole and lets the bees out one at a time. Others kill each bee as it comes out. When all the bees are killed, they dig out the hole and eat the honey."

To the stock of playthings which the child makes for himself 524
are added toys given him by his parents or other relatives. Little
girls are presented with buckskin dolls filled with grass,[9] toy cra-
dles, water jars, and burden baskets. For the boy the obvious [824]
plaything is a small bow and some arrows made of ocean spray,
mock orange, snowberry, willow, service berry, or *Edwinia amer-* [237]
icana. As a blanket for her doll cradle the girl uses a cottontail
rabbit skin. A rabbit-skin cap, with the ears left on, is made for
the little boy.

The older boys and girls enjoy swimming, a sport which a 857
child begins to master at about the age of eight. A practical pur- [481]
pose is credited to another activity:

[9] These dolls are not supposed to approximate the human form too closely, for anything that has great likeness to a human being but is not animate is suggestive of a corpse. The mothers would not, at first, allow their children to have dolls of European type, claiming that they were "too natural." [532] [177] [764]

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These preparations tax the resources of any one family. Therefore, because of the pleasurable public aspects of the rite, individuals outside the relationship group may lend aid, and its approach is a signal for exceptional generosity in many matters. 881 431 476

The man who's with you [on the hunt] is ruling you. He tells you what he wants and takes it. But many times it happens this way: if you were out with a thoughtful man and you had a daughter who was going to have a feast next summer, this man you're hunting with might say, "Your daughter is going to have a feast, and you haven't enough buckskin. You keep all the hides." He would do that because maybe that might be your last chance to get buckskin.

Buckskin is needed for the ornamented dress which the girl will wear during the rite. At least five skins are required: two for the upper garment, two for the skirt, and one for the high moccasins. This clothing follows the ordinary dress in cut, but only choice materials are used, and the garments are decorated with special designs. The girl's mother, her grandmother, or some other close female relative may work on this clothing; but, if no one in the family has the requisite skill, an outsider may be hired. The maker proceeds carefully and according to prescribed rules. Doeskins or buckskins may be used, but the tail suspended from the jacket must be that of a black-tailed doe. For the upper garment the skin side faces outward; for the skirt the flesh side is out. 881 292 294 [602]

The garments are decorated with designs symbolic of the forces which will be supplicated on behalf of the girl. The morning star and the crescent moon may be represented, as may a stepped design symbolizing the dwelling. Circles indicate the sun, and fringes streaming from their centers, the sunbeams. Connected arcs stand for the rainbow. Before the dress is finished all parts have to be colored yellow, the hue of pollen. Yellow ocher may be rubbed on, or the buckskin may be dyed in a liquid prepared from algerita roots. [532] [386]

The dress must be blessed as well as beautifully finished: [789]

While it is being made they have someone sing for it. J. [a man] used to do it. But this singer is usually an old woman. She sometimes sings over it during two months. The family has to give her a great deal for these services. Sometimes the woman who makes it ties amulets on and sings for every string. [533]

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The girl feels good toward the man who sings for her too. She gives him presents now and then. She has to give the man a horse and saddle at the end of the ceremony. Usually he gets a good buckskin and blankets too. The father of one of the girls who recently went through her ceremony had only one good horse, but he had to give it to the singer. It's that gray one that B. [the singer] rides now. He had to do it according to the Indian way.

For the girl, her relatives, and a few serious-minded individuals the ceremonial aspects of the occasion will be of most significance. But for most of the guests the feasting, the social dancing, and the performance of the masked dancers will be the greatest attractions.

The masked dancers are men dressed and decorated to represent mountain-dwelling supernaturals. The dancers themselves possess no power and no ceremony. But the one who "makes" them, who fashions the masks they wear and paints or directs the painting of their bodies, is a shaman who controls a most important ceremony. The primary purpose of the masked-dancer rite when it is not associated with the celebration for the adolescent girl is to ward off epidemic and evil or to cure illness that has been contracted. When it is so used, its performance is a most serious matter. However, these same masked dancers have become one of the standard sources of entertainment of the girl's puberty rite. Early each evening they appear, and, while they may bless the camp initially, drive away evil, or even perform some cures privately on request, their main function is to engage in several spectacular dances for the noisy approval of the onlookers.

The girl's relatives must secure the co-operation of a masked-dancer shaman:

A month or more before the ceremony the ones who are giving the feast start thinking about the man they are going to get to paint the masked dancers. They say, "Let's ask the old man."

One of them goes to the old man and says, "I'm giving a feast and want you to work for us. I don't want you to refuse." If the old man promises, it is all settled. The relatives of the girl will begin talking to him, perhaps it will be her uncles or aunts.

I've seen it done this way, too. Suppose there are a lot of camps together. A man whose girl is going to have her ceremony would come out and say, "All you people, listen! I'm going to give a feast for all you people. I need your help. I want all you men who know the ceremony of the masked dancers and you men

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535 They came for me several times. Finally P. came. He said, "My friend, I want
465 you to do it. Dance, and the first time the masked dancers come to the fire, I'm going to show you what I will give you." So we were coming to the fire. I was the leading dancer. P. came to us. He put up his hand and gave me a big present.

535 The virtuoso among dancers is sometimes particular and demanding concerning the conditions under which he will lend his services:

When I was a leading dancer, I wanted a long stick so that I wouldn't have to bend to place it on the ground. That's the teaching I got from my father and from the leading dancer. When I wanted to make it short, I'd grab it in the middle. So if they gave me a short stick, I'd throw it to another dancer, and they'd make a long one for me. Each dancer always carries two sticks.

[532] I always wanted a new mask. During the winter I might notice that another had used, in a curing ceremony, the mask I usually wore. Then in the spring or summer they would want me to dance. I would say, "I want a new mask. I'm not going to have someone else in my mask. They sweat in there, and it's dangerous and gives diseases."

535 The experienced dancer takes delight in mastery over the
532 minute details of his calling:

Then my father would make me a new mask. He would put the buckskin over my head. "Where are your eyes?" he would ask. I would tell him to make the holes, not at my eyes, but over my eyebrows. He would mark it and make the holes there. Y. told me it should be done this way because the buckskin stretches. Then, when the buckskin is pulled down, it will be just right.

"How do you know the holes should be high?" my father asked. "You told me to follow Y. and that's what he told me."

"That's good," said the old man. "Some dancers tell me to put the holes just at their eyes. Then they go digging at the holes with their sticks, trying to make them bigger, when they are going around the fire."

535 Within his own sphere the masked dancer is relatively independent:

Sometimes there are sixteen masked dancers at the feast grounds. The best men don't want to dance out there where it's crowded. They can't dance well then. You can come in and dance and go out about four times and then you can stop if you want to. You don't have to ask the shaman; you just go over to the place where you were painted and leave the equipment there. Sometimes the old man will ask when he sees you the next day, "Why did you stop so soon last night?" You just make some excuse. When you quit, you come back and watch the dances.

When you're out there in the woods resting between dances, the people call for the dancers. You don't have to pay any attention. You come back when you

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535 uttered recitation which separates the choruses can be freely
533 translated as follows for one of these songs:
[782
539]

Inside the holy home
At the place called "Home in the Turning Rock,"
The Mountain Spirits, truly holy,
Rejoice over me to the four directions
And make sounds over me.

The words of another of these songs show a forceful and vivid imagery:

[539]

In the middle of the Holy Mountain,
In the middle of its body, stands a hut,
Brush-built, for the Black Mountain Spirit.
White lightning flashes in these moccasins;
White lightning streaks in angular path;
I am the lightning flashing and streaking!
This headdress lives; the noise of its pendants
Sounds and is heard!
My song shall encircle these dancers!

[594] When the body-painting is finished, the dancers eat the gen-
[264] erous meal provided for them by the feast-makers. It is nearly dusk now, and soon the great fire will be kindled below and the people will gather to see the entrance of the masked dancers.

[756] While the shaman chants another set of four songs, the
[782] dancers line up in a row facing the east, headdresses in hand, praying and asking to be blessed. Of one of these songs the informant said:

I'm going to sing an old song. It's very valuable. It is sung when the masked dancers are standing there, painted, dancing in place, and ready to go out, shaking their headdresses. This song is called "Earth's Song." It is sung very slowly.

[539]

Thus speaks earth's thunder:
Because of it there is good about you,
Because of it your body is well:
Thus speaks earth's thunder.

535 As these songs are sung, the impersonators gyrate clockwise,
[198] uttering their call at the mention of the Mountain Spirits and
[532] motioning with their headdresses to the directions. The buck-
[788] skin masks have been moistened so that they will be pliable. At the conclusion of the singing, the dancers, including the clown if

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one is present, spit into the masks four times, make three ritual feints toward themselves with the headdresses, and draw the masks over their heads the fourth time. Now they are ready to move in single file down the hillside, led by their most experienced dancer.

As they depart, they present a colorful spectacle. They wear high moccasins (with upturned toe) and buckskin skirts. These are colored yellow. The skirt is held in place by a broad belt; and from the skirt are suspended pendants of various kinds.[7] The arms and upper part of the body, with the exception of the face, are entirely covered with paint. Black, white, and yellow are most used; blue appears occasionally. The motifs most frequently employed are narrow bands of contrasting color, a branching design to stand for cactus, a saw-toothed element, a stepped line, a zigzag line, the triangle, the Greek cross, a pattée type cross, and a four-pointed star. These designs may remain the same all four nights, the same design may be used the first and third nights and another the second and fourth nights, or different designs may be painted each evening. Occasionally, the painted designs on the leader vary slightly from those of the others. The dancers carry painted wooden sticks in each hand; one or both of those carried by the leader may have a cross-piece at the handle. Long, narrow, buckskin streamers with eagle feathers attached are tied just above the elbows.

The mask is a buckskin hood which fits snugly over the head and is gathered at the neck by a drawstring. Two tiny holes for the eyes, and one sometimes cut at the mouth, are the only openings. These hoods are usually painted black but are also seen in yellow, in blue, or in two tones. When they are not a solid color, they may show such design elements as have been mentioned for the body. On the mask, at the forehead or nose

[7] Today, small cone-shaped jingles of tin have taken the place of these on the dance kilts, the dress made for the pubescent girl, and on other objects (awl cases, buckskin bags, burden baskets, etc.). To make these tin jingles, the metal is cut to proper size, placed over a depression in a board, and smartly struck at the median point. This curls the two sides, and it is then an easy matter to press them together with the fingers to form the cone, which is attached to the garment on a length of fringe.

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On the mask, at the forehead or nose region, may be suspended a piece of abalone shell or turquoise. One shaman employs the shell "because abalone has strength, and the masked dancers should have the same strength as the abalone."

At its top the hood is attached to the horns[8] or uprights by spreading prongs of a piece of oak which has been split, soaked in water, and heated until it could be worked. At its upper end this piece is connected to the yucca or sotol frame which rises above it. A bunch of turkey feathers or some green juniper is tied at the point of union. The superstructure of wooden slats looks like a great, squarish candelabra balanced on the top of the dancer's head. It is essentially a horizontal bar to which vertical pieces approximately two feet high have been attached at the two ends and in the middle. From each end of the horizontal support hang two or four short lengths of wood called "earrings." These strike against one another, making a sound that has become a symbol for the approach of the dancers. From the tops of the vertical pieces float downy eagle feathers. The colors of the uprights are black, yellow, and green (blue);[9] red "would be used only by a witch on a masked-dancer horn."

The shaman, drum in hand, may accompany his dancers to the edge of the clearing. Then, often, he will join the group of men who have gathered at the north of the ceremonial structure to sing for the masked dancers.

But the entrance of the dancers may be delayed still further, for they are often called upon at this time to cure. Yet the fiction of their purely social function at the puberty rite is maintained by having what serious ritual they attempt remain a private matter, unguided by the sponsors of the ceremony:

[8] That the headdress should be called "horns" is of special interest, in the light of the fact that Mountain Spirits are associated with the protection and guardianship of game animals, the most important of which have horns.

[9] Juice of the yucca leaf is mixed with charcoal, yellow ocher or a decoction from algerita root, and soft turquoise to obtain these colors. The addition of the yucca juice makes the difference between the impermanent paint used on the bodies of the dancers and the fixed color with which the headdress and sticks are painted. Green and blue are not terminologically differentiated.

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He dips his right forefinger into the red paint, holds it up, and sings the "Red Paint Song." Using a splinter of wood to trace the rays, he draws a sun symbol on the palm of his left hand in pollen, red ocher, and specular iron ore. While he does this, he sings a song, "a long one because it takes a long time to put that design on":

881 533 793 788 [532]

Now I'll make long life of the sun's rays,
Now I'll make long life of the sun's pointed rays,
I'll make peaks extending outward.
The rays of the sun and long life are made of pollen,
The points of the sun and long life are made of pollen,
The points of the sun and long life are made of specular iron ore,
The rays of the sun and long life are made of specular iron ore,
The rays of the sun and long life are made of blue paint,
The points of the sun and long life are made of blue paint,
The rays of the sun and long life are made of red paint,
The points of the sun and long life are made of red paint,
The rays of the sun and long life are made of white paint,
The points of the sun and long life are made of white paint.

[539]

The completed sun symbol is held up to the advancing shafts of light as the singer chants:

That which comes has come well out,
In here it has come.

[539]

Again the singer faces the girl. He touches the painted hand to her body at various places, circles her head clockwise with it, and finally obliterates the symbol by rubbing it over her head just as the rays of the sun shine upon her. At this time, too, the singer ties a piece of abalone shell or turquoise to the girl's forelock.

The eagle feather with which the girl has been led to the inclosure each of the four nights has been thrust into the bundle of grama grass. The singer uses the stems and the quill of this bundle as a brush to paint the girl with white clay. First he paints the right side and then the left side of her face, next her right arm below the elbow and her left arm, and finally her legs from the moccasin tops to the knees. This is a signal for the onlookers to press forward. With the materials left, the singer marks them on various parts of their bodies as they file past him.

881 533 793 [302]

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524 the bone is hidden in one of these, they are all filled at the top with grass." Often cylindrical sacks made of hide (later of cloth) serve as moccasins.

[237] The rounded section of bone from the hip or knee of an animal is hidden. It is often blackened by being thrown into the fire before the start of the game. The other things required are a robe or blanket to be held up by those hiding the bone, a stick with which the person delegated to find the bone strikes the moccasin in which he thinks it has been placed, and counters which each side [532] is trying to obtain. The stick is about two feet long and often is incised with carvings representative of birds which took part in the legendary game, such as the road runner and the turkey. [824] The counters are strips of yucca leaf, six to eight inches long. Usually there are sixty-eight of them, worth a point total of one hundred and four. Sixty-four of the counters are plain and count one each; four of them are fringed at the end and are each valued at ten.

To determine which side shall hide the bone first, a bone or a stone which has been moistened on one side is thrown between two of the opposing players, and one calls "Wet" or "Dry." The side which wins this trial now orders the blanket raised, and one of its members hides the bone, while the others sing.

[533] [793] When they play the game, they sing the songs which the birds and animals who played it first sang about themselves. And the moccasins and the bone, too —each has a song about itself. These are the first ones sung. These songs are sung during the playing. The side hiding the bone sings while the hiding is going on and while the one who guesses for the other side is trying to make up his mind about which moccasin to strike. They sing loudly and try to confuse him in every way, but no drum is used. If a side is lucky with a song and the others are guessing wrong, they keep on singing that same one until the bone is taken away from them.

[535] During the singing, members of the group dance in place.

When the bone is concealed, the hider calls, "Ready," and the robe is removed. A representative of the opposition comes forward to strike with his stick. If he hits the correct moccasin, he wins the bone for his side without any gain in counters for the other side. If, however, he strikes a moccasin to either side of the one in which the bone actually lies, four counters are taken from

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right up to them and talk. You and I can't see it or hear it, but they can. Like in one ceremony I saw: the shaman said in one place, "Everything is light. I see a big light." He saw it, but it was a pitch-dark night, and we couldn't see a thing.

The Chiricahua, like all people who have developed a religious system, have had, in spite of the religious safeguards which they affirm, to recognize the existence of failure, danger, death, and evil. They account for them by a theory of the plasticity and duality of power. Thus hateful individuals may employ complacent power for malevolent rather than kindly ends. Or the personified source of the power may itself be represented as malicious and may lead weak-willed shamans into dubious practices by deceit, threats, and promises. Therefore it is necessary to be constantly wary of cleverly veiled evil power (sorcery) and of ceremonialists (witches) who are not above using their rituals to harm, betray, or cause illness. Consequently, a substantial part of Chiricahua ceremonialism, perhaps its most dramatic aspect, is the contest with supernatural power between the shamans and the sorcerers. Sometimes a shaman who controls one type of supernatural power, who has been granted a ceremony from a natural force or a heavenly body, for instance, may be suspicious of rituals from contrasting sources, such as the animals of the earth. These views are exemplified in the excerpts which follow:

I came to know that power is not good or bad of itself. It is just power. It can be used for good or evil. It all depends on the person who has it. Look at the power from the Mountain People. (The Mountain People are mountain-dwelling supernaturals who guard the Chiricahua and their territory from harm. They are impersonated by masked dancers.) The Mountain People are good. They help the Chiricahua. We have them at the girl's puberty rite. But they can, to the Chiricahua mind, be used for evil too. A good many people think X. is a witch and uses Mountain Spirit power for evil. A good many people will not go through that Mountain Spirit ceremony of his. When it is going on, they get pretty far in the back; they are taking no chances. But there are others who think it is all right, who go through with it and consider X. a shaman.

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796 424 son or other close relative learn and carry on his ritual. Not infrequently, however, these kinsmen are uninterested in the rite, and a more ardent candidate is found among outsiders.

My father has been begging my brother to take it (the father's ceremony). My brother has been taking it (over) a little; he has been practicing with the old man and helping him. The old man begged E. (another son) and me to do it too. . . . The old man wants us to take over his ceremony. He said to [435] us, "I want you boys to have it. All you'll have to give me is one steer. I paid a lot more for it when I got it myself."

796 424 787 535 532 [955] I tried to give it (a masked dancer ceremony) to my grandsons, but they didn't want it. They didn't care much for it. Then E. was sick. He appealed to me for help. He asked if the Mountain Spirits could help him in any way. I told him, "Act as one of my masked dancers and perhaps it will help you." He danced and got well. Then later Mountain Spirits appeared to E. in a dream. They were dressed and designed like my masked dancers. He told me about it. I knew what it was for. I told him, "Well, you can use the outfits with me and carry the ceremony on." Then E. saw in a vision that the Mountain People wanted him to have the ceremony, so I turned it over to him. He took it very seriously. He now knows the songs and has the right to carry on the ceremony. It took him four days to learn it. He learned the songs thoroughly again in a dream after he was taught them by me. He has full rights now. Both he and I have the (masked dancer) outfits now; both of us use them. We do not make two sets of masked dancers but share in the making of one set. But he could do it all alone now. I do not even have to be present.

(See also *An Apache Life-Way*, pp. 210–11.)

787 798 [796] When a ceremony is acquired through a personal supernatural experience, it is the power or power source that usually takes the initiative, though the individual approached has the right to reject the offer if he sees fit. This is apparent from the following discussion of the manner in which a young man is prepared for a vision experience.

Perhaps some day you will be out alone. Something will talk to